

THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



FOUNDED 1917



Verne Nelson

Marsh Wren, Caspian Tern, and White-crowned Sparrow (clockwise from top right), three species that breed in the Bay Area and are included in GGA monitoring projects



Monitoring Birds of the San Francisco Bay Area

In 2010, Golden Gate Audubon remains committed to continuing its tradition of monitoring Bay Area bird populations. For decades, GGA volunteers have participated in Christmas Bird Counts and both breeding and wintering bird surveys. The resulting data provide important information about local birds and their habitats and are often shared with national monitoring efforts. Volunteers have also participated in programs such as FernWatch, to monitor the endangered California Least Terns at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, and

Snowy Plover Watch, to monitor the threatened plovers that winter at Crissy Field and Ocean Beach in San Francisco.

This year, we are expanding our monitoring efforts to include surveys of land birds along the North Richmond shoreline, at Aquatic Park in Berkeley, and in San Francisco at Candlestick Point, Lake Merced,

and the western end of Golden Gate Park.

From September 2008 through August 2009, Golden Gate Audubon conducted a comprehensive survey of waterbirds and shorebirds at the North Richmond shoreline. This year, we initiated monitoring of land birds in several parts of the shoreline, including Point Pinole Regional Park,

Wildcat Creek Park, and the Landfill Loop Trail near the West Contra Costa Sanitary Landfill. Although the data have yet to be compiled and analyzed, we have found ample evidence of breeding White-crowned Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Marsh Wrens, and Red-winged Blackbirds.

In the fall 2009, Berkeley's Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department briefed Golden Gate Audubon about its plan to conduct vegetation trimming and cleanup activities at Berkeley's Aquatic Park. The city also invited us to comment on the plans and monitor birds at the park. Volunteers are conducting area searches throughout the breeding season. The information will contribute to the revegetation project and, we hope, show how bird populations will respond to the planting of native trees and shrubs at the park.

MONITORING BIRDS continued on page 12



INSIDE

5 Summer Speaker Series

7 Birding by Bike

10 Special Event: Birds at Risk

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Membership is \$35 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets six times per year (schedule can be obtained from the main office).

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My Keys to Birding Success

As a relatively new birder, I have been going out in the field as frequently as possible. I find that repetition and study are two of the keys to learning about birds and their behavior. Spending time with the best birders is another. So I took advantage of Golden Gate Audubon's Birdathon 2010 to bird with three of our talented trip leaders.

On the first Birdathon outing, my adventure started at San Francisco's Presidio and Crissy Field with Josiah Clark and GGA board member Jay Pierrepont. Josiah is among San Francisco's best young birders, and we saw 66 species in our three hours with him, including a Red-necked Grebe that was far enough out in the bay that I couldn't have identified it without Josiah's expert help.

The second weekend, I joined Murphy's MOB (Many Observers). Led by veteran trip leaders Dan and Joan Murphy, our team started in Golden Gate Park, then went to the Presidio, the Cliff House, and Fort Funston, and, finally, down the Peninsula. In all, we identified 103 species in 12 hours, including a Merlin with prey, a Red-throated Loon, and my favorite—a brilliant Hooded Oriole.

The day was also noteworthy because we were joined by Rosabel Miró, executive director of Panama Audubon. At one point, she called the group back to an area we had just passed and asked, "Do you have Common Moorhen here?" There stood the bird, perfectly camouflaged. Although Rosabel had never birded in the Bay Area, she repeated her skill for spotting the elusive half a dozen times.

As this issue of the Gull goes to press, I am getting ready to bird in the East Bay with Bob Lewis, another of GGA's talented trip leaders and teachers.

I have two reasons for telling you these stories. First, I want to publicly recognize the devoted volunteer trip leaders who share their time, expertise, and passion for birds. Dan, Josiah, and Bob are not only three of the Bay Area's best birders. They are also gifted teachers. Countless times during our long day, Dan called out a bird, set up the scope for everyone to view it, and then, either from memory or by using the *National Geographic Field Guide* for illustration, gave a detailed lesson on the bird's behavior and migratory patterns.

Growing Golden Gate Audubon's membership by introducing new people to birding and wildlife conservation is among our primary goals. For GGA to be effective as a conservation and advocacy organization, our membership must represent a cross section of the Bay Area's population.

One of the best ways to grow is to get people out in nature and show them the diversity of birds in the Bay Area. According to a recent membership survey, most of our current members joined through our field trips, classes, or seminars. As an emerging birder, I am making a commitment to get out into the field with our great trip leaders and bring along as many new people as possible. I will make a special effort to invite people who might not participate in birding. The love of nature knows no generational or racial boundaries.

I invite you to do the same. Join a Golden Gate Audubon field trip this summer and fall, and bring along a friend.

Mark Welther

—Mark Welther, Executive Director

Help the Environment by Choosing the Gull Online

Join other bird lovers who are viewing our award-winning newsletter online. You will help save paper and reduce our expenses for printing and mailing. Best of all, the photos in the online Gull are in color. We will email you a link to the online Gull. Check the box on the ballot form on page 11, fill in your email address, and send the form to our office.

Interns Reflect on Lessons in the Field

For the third semester in a row, Golden Gate Audubon has had the pleasure of hosting habitat restoration interns. The interns take on general maintenance tasks at our restoration sites during the week and assist us on weekend workdays. Their goal is to learn more about California native plants and their habitats, invasive plants and their removal, monitoring techniques, and working with volunteers. Two interns we hosted this spring semester hailed from San Francisco City College. They describe their experiences in their own words. —Jennifer Robinson Maddox

ROXANNE RAMIREZ

I consider myself an advocate for animals. I found my love for animals as a young girl. My first job at a local shelter was my first step toward pursuing a life dedicated to helping our animal friends. My work primarily consisted of the rehabilitation of cats and dogs. This grew to an overwhelming concern for our wildlife and their natural environment. During my second year in college, I decided to take a few classes in environmental studies and learned about the immense degradation that humans inflict on the Earth and its native species. It was obvious at this point that my love would take me toward a degree in ecology and wildlife conservation.

My passion took me from Texas to California to pursue my dream of one day working with distinguished environmental organizations. As a student at City College, I found a great opportunity to intern with Golden Gate Audubon doing habitat restoration at Harding Park and Pier 94. This opportunity has opened my eyes to the details, dedication, and great responsibility that go into this effort. Now, my love for animal rehabilitation has shown up in a new light, the rehabilitation of the land. The gratification I get when I help in the field is the familiar feeling I get when I help an animal. The two are inseparable. We can help save our endangered animals by protecting and restoring their homes.

I have grown so much in the recent months as an advocate for animals and now for their environment. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to grow from my experience with GGA. The skills I've learned and the friends I've made throughout my internship will follow me throughout my life as I venture out to explore the next step in my field.

LAWRENCE FERNANDEZ

When I signed up to intern with GGA in January, I looked at habitat restoration as a head-down, hands-in-the-dirt stewardship of the land, as penance paid for the destruction and alteration of natural systems. Each weed I removed would counteract each weed planted by wind or will of man; each native plant I helped grow was a counterbalance against the growth of human development on a land so bountiful it had sustained thousands of years of human life alongside wild life. I am an environmental science major, and not a day goes by that my instructors are not trying to instill in me



Roxanne Ramirez at Harding Park, San Francisco

an appreciation for the genius of nature and her evolutionary relationships, and the ignorance with which modern man has come to alter those relationships.

Working on the wetlands at Pier 94 and quail habitat at Harding Park, I could not have predicted playing a large role in one relationship—the one between myself and the volunteer crouched in the earth a few plants away. Watching Jennifer, our volunteer coordinator, rally the troops at the monthly work parties for both sites, I've witnessed firsthand that the genius of nature extends into the lives of people—that without willing hands and caring hearts, habitat restoration doesn't work.

It can be overwhelming to start the workday looking out onto an endless field of invasive radish or grasses that choke out native plants and disrupt bird habitat, but it can be wholly empowering to step back and see the change that a few hours and a few hands can make. Throughout the semester, I've developed a closer understanding of both Bay Area nature and community, learning the names and stories of native plants, birds, and volunteers so that each may grow and live stronger and happier.



Lawrence Fernandez at Pier 94, San Francisco



VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Saturdays, June 5, August 7,

9 a.m. – noon

Pier 94 wetlands restoration workday. As part of our ongoing efforts to restore wetlands along San Francisco's southern waterfront, we will continue weeding the wetland and working on the new upland plots. Join us and see what birds are spending the summer in the wetland. Refreshments provided.

Saturdays, June 19, July 17, August 21,

9 a.m. – noon

White-crowned Sparrow habitat restoration. Participate in restoring habitat along Golden Gate Park's bison paddock by planting natives, weeding established sites, and nurturing the site for local sparrows. Closed-toed shoes and layered clothes recommended. Please RSVP if part of a group of five or more volunteers to kimberly.kiefer@sfgov.org.

Saturdays, June 19, July 17, August 21,

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Wetland habitat restoration at the MLK Jr. Shoreline in Oakland. We will continue our work around Arrowhead Marsh and Elmhurst Creek. Join us for weeding and trash pickup while watching the foraging and diving waterfowl and shorebirds. Refreshments provided.

Monday, July 5, 9 a.m. – noon

After the big July 4 celebrations are over, help us pick up the resulting trash along the beach used by endangered Western Snowy Plovers. Meeting locations will be announced; check our website for details.

Saturday, July 24, 9 a.m. – noon

In collaboration with the East Bay Regional Park District and the Watershed Project, we will hold the annual Creek Care cleanup event at the Wildcat Creek Trail Staging Area in Richmond. Come learn about the Wildcat Creek watershed and help take action by cleaning our community's waterways. All cleanup supplies will be provided. Bring water and sunscreen, and wear layered

clothing and closed-toed shoes that can get wet and dirty. Please RSVP by July 21.

Mark your calendars for the annual coastal cleanup on Saturday, September 25. For updates and directions, visit www.goldengateaudubon.org/volunteer. Have a question? Contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox, Volunteer Coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.

ANNUAL TOUR OF LEAST TERN COLONY

Return of the Terns, the annual celebration of the nesting California Least Terns at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, will be held on Saturday, June 19. The focus is a one-hour bus trip that takes visitors into the refuge, which is normally closed to the public. Buses depart from the Crab Cove Visitor Center in Alameda. The center will offer free slide presentations about the terns at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., and 12:30 p.m.

Reservations are required for this very popular event, which includes three bus trips, at 11 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m. To sign up, call the East Bay Regional Park District at 888.EBPARKS or go to www.ebparksonline.org. Return of the Terns is cosponsored by the East Bay Regional Park District, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge, Golden Gate Audubon, and Audubon California.

EAST BAY DOG GROUP

The East Bay Dog Group, a subcommittee of the East Bay Conservation Committee, continues to meet and address issues related to dogs and wildlife in East Bay parks. The group aims to work with dog owners and dog groups to help reduce incidents of wildlife harassment due to dogs, especially off-leash dogs, in important habitat areas such as Berkeley's Cesar Chavez Park and Aquatic Park. The subcommittee will also focus on educating dog owners about the impacts of their and their dogs' behavior and will work with the East Bay Park District and East Bay cities to improve signage, provide educational brochures, and mobilize volunteers to help get the word out.

The subcommittee needs your help, especially (but not exclusively!) if you're a dog owner. We meet at the Golden Gate Audubon offices in Berkeley. Please contact Phil Price (phil@creekcats.com) if you would like to attend or if you would like to help.

ONE MORE TRAINING REMAINS FOR TERNWATCH 2010

If you've thought about volunteering for Ternwatch at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, you have one more opportunity to attend a training session—on Tuesday, June 29. After attending the session, volunteers monitor the colony of breeding California Least Terns from their personal vehicles for a three-hour period to spot incoming predators and to prevent any disturbance to the colony. Forms will be provided for recording predator and tern activities. The June 29 training, held at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office, 2275 Monarch Street, starts promptly at 6 p.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m. Volunteers should arrive between 5:30 and 6 p.m. Before attending, please RSVP to Susan Euing of the USFWS at susan_euing@yahoo.com.

JOIN A CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Meet other birders and wildlife enthusiasts on your side of the bay and find out about projects in your community.

The East Bay Conservation Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. For further information, contact chair Phil Price (pnprice@creekcats.com).

The San Francisco Conservation Committee will meet Wednesdays, June 9, July 7, August 4, and September 1, at 7 p.m. at the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way (www.randallmuseum.org). For more information, contact chair Noreen Weeden (nweeden@goldengateaudubon.org).

Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, cochaired by Linda Vallee and Leora Fee-ney, meets the third Monday of the month. For time and location, contact Leora Fee-ney (leoraalameda@att.net).



SPEAKER SERIES

JENNIFER ROBINSON MADDOX, COORDINATOR



Beaverpond Baskettail by Tim Manolis

Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Bay Area

Tim Manolis

Berkeley: Thursday, June 17 – 7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

Tim Manolis's presentation on the dragonflies and damselflies of California will have a special focus on the San Francisco Bay region. You will learn about the various species seen, how to find and identify them, and ways in which even amateur observers can contribute to increased understanding of the status and distribution of Bay Area damselflies and dragonflies.

Tim Manolis, a Sacramento Valley native, has been studying birds and other aspects of nature for over 40 years. He has a PhD in biology from the University of Colorado and works as an artist, illustrator, writer, and biological consultant. He wrote and illustrated *Dragonflies and Damselflies of California* (University of California Press Natural History Guides Series, 2003) and illustrated *Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento Valley Regions* by Arthur Shapiro (Natural History Guides, 2007). He lives in Sacramento, California.

Midway Atoll: 60 People and 2 Million Birds

Dave Hartley and Jeanine Lovett

San Francisco: Thursday, July 15 – 7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge has opened to small groups of visitors again. This nature lover's paradise supports 17 seabird species, including the largest Laysan Albatross colony in the world. Dave Hartley and Jeanine Lovett's presentation is based on a trip they took to the atoll in 2009. Through photographs, they will show life in the albatross colony—including Laysan, Black-footed, and Short-tailed Albatrosses—along with Red-tailed Tropicbirds, Red-footed Boobies, Great Frigatebirds, White Terns, and Laysan Ducks. They will also discuss the environmental issues affecting the atoll.

Dave Hartley, born and educated in England, has lived in the Bay Area since 1997. A passionate photographer, he has visited all seven continents, including three trips to Antarctica. Jeanine Lovett was born and raised in San Diego, and studied art and design in San Francisco. She works as a freelance graphic designer and, like Dave, is a passionate photographer. Dave and Jeanine were married in Antarctica.

Majestic Feathers

Kathleen Cameron

Berkeley: Thursday, August 19 – 7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

In 2008, on her first birding trip to Costa Rica with guide Edwin Ramirez, Kathleen Cameron saw firsthand how human disturbance and habitat loss and degradation negatively impact the breeding and wintering grounds of North American and Central American birds. She came home determined to foster an increased awareness of the effect of habitat destruction on the northern and southern hemispheres. A photographer and videographer, she developed a multimedia presentation highlighting the ecological connections between North and South America, including the migration connection, the role that humans play in habitat destruction and restoration, and the stunning beauty of the birds and their habitats.

Kathleen Cameron resides in Bellevue, Idaho, where she leads bird walks, conducts bird surveys, and serves as subregional editor for *North American Birds*, an American Birding Association publication. She has photographed or videotaped more than 600 of the world's birds. After traveling to Costa Rica and meeting Edwin Ramirez, she organized birding tours to Costa Rica (www.majesticfeathers.com).



Laysan Albatross.



Chestnut-mandibled Toucan.

Berkeley Speaker Series: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm.

San Francisco Speaker Series: First Unitarian Universalist Church and Center, 1187 Franklin Street at Geary. Visit www.uusf.org/visitors_faq.html, and use the Map It! link on the left for directions. Public transit, street parking, and parking in a lot for a fee are available.



FIELD TRIPS

JENNIFER ROBINSON MADDOX, COORDINATOR

Entrance fee

Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox at 510.843.9374. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake

San Francisco, Alameda County

**Fridays, June 4, September 3,
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.**

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,
philajane6@yahoo.com

Meet at the parking lot at the north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile, 2-hour-plus stroll through this lush riparian area. Mark your calendar for the first Friday of June. These popular Jewel Lake rambles will resume in September.

Hayward Regional Shoreline

Alameda County

Saturday, June 5, 8:45 a.m. – noon

Rusty Scalf, rscalf@sonic.net,
510.666.9936 (email preferred)

Space may still be available on this trip to the shoreline's reclamation area, located behind a locked gate, to see nesting birds, including American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, and Forster's and Least Terns. Redhead and Lesser Scaup have nested here during more than one season; both nest very rarely in the Bay Area. Eared Grebe have nested here as well.

The trip is limited to 20 participants. Contact Rusty to reserve a spot. The trip begins promptly from the Interpretive Center (www.haywardrec.org/hayshore.html); latecomers will not be admitted.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

**Sundays, June 6, July 4, August 1,
September 5, 8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, Dominik Mosur, polkskatata@yahoo.com

Meet at the front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. This delightful section of the park has several micro-habitats that attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This

monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

Alcatraz Island

Wednesday, June 9, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Eddie Bartley, eddie@naturetrip.com

Don't miss this last chance to go on this exclusive trip for Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members! The trip is limited to 10 participants. Expect to see numerous breeding birds: Western and California Gulls, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Snowy Egrets, and Black Oystercatchers.

Reserve your spot by contacting Stephanie Strait, GGA Office Manager, ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222. Once you have received confirmation, book space on the ferry with Alcatraz Cruises at 415.981.7625 or www.alcatrazcruises.com. Buy a ticket (\$26) for the 9 a.m. Early Bird Tour. Tickets sell out several days in advance. The ferry departs from Pier 33, near the corner of Bay St. and Embarcadero. The ferry boards at 8:30 a.m. Each walk is about 1.5 hours. Participants can stay as long as they like on the island. \$

Corona Heights

San Francisco

**Fridays, June 18, July 16, August 20,
8 – 10 a.m.**

Charles Hibbard; Brian Fitch; Dominik Mosur, polkskatata@yahoo.com (leaders will vary by month)

Meet in front of the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at the end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We will enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking the east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring the hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland, Alameda County

Wednesdays, June 23, July 28,

August 25, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Meet at the large spherical cage near the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up the garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down the lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. Summer is a quiet time at Lake Merritt, but there is always something worth watching.

Take the 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking is at the boat-house lot near the spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is probably free on weekday mornings, but will be \$3 if the kiosk is occupied when you arrive.

Lassen Volcanic National Park

Friday – Sunday, June 25 – 27

Dan and Joan Murphy, murphsf@comcast.net, 415.564-0074 (email preferred)

Join Dan and Joan for their annual family camping excursion and a chance to see Black Swift, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Calliope Hummingbird, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, and many of the flycatchers, warblers, and finches that breed in the mountains. On Friday, we'll meet at the Manzanita Lake Campground store at 6:30 a.m. to bird around the lake for 2–3 hours and then again at the store at 10:30 a.m. for a leisurely hike of 3–5 miles on one of Lassen's beautiful trails. On Saturday, we'll meet by the camp store at 7:30 a.m. and caravan north to Burney Falls, Fall River Valley, and Baum Lake for an all-day excursion. On Sunday, we'll drive through the park, making frequent stops for birding. The trip usually ends after lunch at Summit Lake Campground.

Check the Manzanita Campground bulletin board for a note with our name and

our campsite number. We will display our usual informational poster at the park entrance station, park visitor center, and Hat Creek Resort office.

Go to www.goldengateaudubon.org/ field-trips for more information about the trip itinerary and details about birding with Dan and Joan on Thursday evening, June 24, if you arrive in the area early.

From the Bay Area, drive north on I-5 to Hwy 44 in Redding. Go east on Hwy 44 to the northwest entrance of Lassen. Camping facilities are available at the Manzanita Lake Campground. Reserve online at www.recreation.gov or by calling 877/444-6777. Lodging is available about 15 miles north of the park at Hat Creek Resort, Old Station, 530.335.7121. Other information, including detailed directions, is on the park website, www.nps.gov/lavo. For carpool availability, check GGA's Yahoo group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GGACarPool>.

Mono Lake and Eastern Sierra

Friday – Sunday, July 9 – 11

Rusty Scalf, rscalf@sonic.net;

Emilie Strauss, 510.540.8749

We will meet in the Mono Lake area at 8 a.m. on July 9. We will visit the west and south shores of Mono Lake, Lundy Canyon, and Saddlebag Lake. Species observed will likely include Green-tailed Towhee, Sage Thrasher, American Dipper, and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. Wildflower displays should be fabulous. Two of the three days will require significant hikes at high elevation, and the third day we will be at over 10,000 feet. Please be in good physical condition. The trip is limited to 20 participants. Contact Rusty Scalf to reserve your spot. Several stops will require modest fees, and on the last day there will be a boat trip that costs about \$15. The heavy snowpack of 2010 may require scheduling adjustments to be determined in late June.

Snag Lake Backpack Trip

Friday – Monday, August 27 – 30

Robin Pulich; David Rice, 510.527.7210,

drice2@comcast.net

Join David and Robin on this annual camping and birding trip to Lassen Volcanic National Park. We will backpack 3 miles to Snag Lake and spend three nights in primitive camping by a stream near a large meadow. We should see flocks of mixed warblers and other songbirds, plus

Bicycle Trips

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Bicycle helmet required. Bring lunch and bikepatch. Don't forget your water.

Reservations are not necessary, but an e-mail or phone call is appreciated.

Transit: www.transitbikes.org

San Leandro to Hayward

Saturday, June 12

Meet at 8 a.m. at the San Leandro BART station following 7:55 a.m. arrival of the train from Richmond. We'll ride 3 miles to the trail head via Williams St. (bike lanes). Or meet at 8:30 a.m. at San Leandro Marina Park. We will bicycle along the Bay Trail to the Hayward Regional Shoreline and the Interpretive Center, making a 14-mile round-trip excursion. The first portion of the trail is paved, and the remaining part is easily negotiable.

Car: From I-880 in San Leandro, take the Marina Blvd. exit, west on 4th St. and left on Marina Blvd. Go to the end to the last parking lot at San Leandro Marina Park.

Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, July 24

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Santa Clara/Great America Capitol Corridor Train Station or at 9:10 a.m. at the trailhead. The ride from the station to Alviso County Park follows a trail and city streets. From Alviso we will ride on streets to Disk Dr. to look for Burrowing Owls, then go to the NWR visitor center, make a circuit of the unpaved trail around the marsh, and return to Alviso County Park. Last year, we found Black Skimmers and both Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes in the marsh and quite a few swallows at the county park. Approximate distance is 15 miles. Trip concludes about noon. Leaders usually arrive by public transit, so delays are possible. It is advisable to call or email for cell phone number and indicate how you are arriving.

Transit: Capitol Corridor Train #723 leaves from Emeryville (EMY) at 7:20 a.m. We will return on Train #734 from Santa Clara (GAC) at 1:02 p.m. (next train is #736 at 2:32 p.m.). Arrive at the station well in advance to purchase your ticket and get on the platform; senior fares at a discount of 15 percent are available for those 62 and over. Contact Kathy if you want to participate in a 10-ride ticket from Emeryville.

Car: Take I-880 south to San Jose, then Hwy 237 west. Go 2.2 miles and take the N. First St. exit. Turn right on N. First, which in about 1 mile becomes Taylor St. In one block, turn right on Gird St., then left on Elizabeth St. and right on Hope St. and continue to Alviso County Park and the trailhead parking lot for the NWR in Alviso.

Quarry Lakes, Alameda Creek, Coyote Hills

Saturday, August 7

Meet at 8:20 a.m. on the east side of the Fremont BART Station in the parking lot. We will return to BART at approximately 3 p.m. We'll see birds from the time we step off the BART train, and they vary with the riparian, marsh, and bayside habitats. Total distance is about 24 miles, mostly on paved bike trails, with almost no uphill.

Transit: The Fremont train passes through the MacArthur station at 7:34 p.m. Allow time to process your ticket and get your bike to the platform.

Car: Take I-880 to Fremont, then the Mowry Ave. exit east toward central Fremont. Go 2.3 miles on Mowry Ave. The BART parking lot is on the east side of the station past Civic Center Dr.

resident birds of the mountains, Bald Eagles, and migrating shorebirds. We will be above 6,000 feet. To avoid impact on the fragile habitat, the trip is limited to

10 people. Participants are responsible for their own gear and food; some shared meals can be arranged. Contact David Rice to reserve a space.

New Big Trips Coordinator

Beginning this month, Chris Bard assumes the volunteer position of Big Trips coordinator. In this role, she will arrange all Golden Gate Audubon trips outside California and will take the lead in finding the right location, tour company, and birding guides. Her first trip abroad was GGA's Big Trip to Botswana in 2008. Her favorite so far was last year's Big Trip to Brazil, which gave her the opportunity to visit the world's largest freshwater wetland, the Pantanal. Chris is excited about contributing her enthusiasm for travel and birding to our Big Trips program.

Chris began birding in the 1990s with her friends. Their first class was Denise Wight's Birding by Ear. After she retired from teaching, Chris found that her interests matched the needs of the Least Tern school program of GGA's Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR). She continues to visit third-grade classes in Alameda and make presentations about the endangered California Least Terns. With her husband, Gary Bard, Chris devised a spreadsheet to keep track of the Alameda bird data collected for FAWR. Gary will take on the Big Trips assistant coordinator position, bringing to the role his past experience as a whitewater river guide and trip leader for Mountain Travel Sobek.

We thank Ruth Tobey for all of her work over the years as the first volunteer Big Trips coordinator. Without her determination and dedication, GGA's Big Trips program would not be as successful as it is. Thanks to Ruth's efforts, many GGA members have seen more of the world than they would have on their own.



Gary Bard

Big Trip to Migration Spectacle

A few spaces are still available on this October 2–10 trip to experience the River of Raptors migration in Veracruz, Mexico, one of nature's spectacles. On a good day, more than 100,000 migrant raptors and vultures are seen; on a big day, over 500,000 have been counted. An estimated 10 million passerines and waterbirds pass by each day. The bird list for central Veracruz numbers 540 species, including 25 endemics. This trip to Veracruz, in partnership with ProNatura, a Mexican conservation group, will also go to local archaeological sites and take side trips to lowland forests and coastal lagoons, as well as spend two nights in the capital city of Xalapa, a short ride into the mountains and cloud forest.

Participants have the option of a basic nine-day tour for \$2,100 or an extended tour (if enough people sign up), through October 13, to Los Tuxtlas rain forest for \$2,650. Prices include a \$150 donation to Golden Gate Audubon. For applications and detailed information, please contact Chris Bard, chrisbard@earthlink.net.

Fall Classes in San Francisco

The first sessions of Joe Morlan's fall classes on North American birds, endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon, start September 14, 15, and 16. All classes meet from 7 to 9:15 p.m. at the Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay Street, which has free parking in the school lot. Registration begins July 1. A \$10 discount is given for registering a week in advance of the start of classes. For information on fees, focus of the classes, books used in the classes, and field trips, as well as the second fall sessions, go to <http://fog.ccsf.edu/jmorlan> or call 415.561.1860. Register online at www.evolvewww.com/cc.ccsf.

Volunteer Opportunities

Field Trip Training for New and Current Leaders

We are always looking for new field trip leaders to take Golden Gate Audubon members and volunteers to locations around the San Francisco Bay Area. This summer, we will host a training session for new and current field trip leaders. If you have thought about becoming a leader, this is your chance to learn from other field trip leaders.

Eco Education Program

Once the school year begins, our Eco-Education staff and volunteers will visit third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classrooms in the fall of 2010 and the spring of 2011 to teach kids about local ecosystems. Every year, our Eco-Education staff seeks dedicated volunteers to assist with this award-winning program on field trips to the MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland and Pt. Pinole Regional Shoreline in the fall, followed by trips to local

creeks in the spring. These class trips are scheduled for weekdays, to coincide with the school day. If you enjoy working with kids and teaching them about the environment, this opportunity might be for you. Training will happen in early September.

Burrowing Owl Docent Program

Another successful year of the docent program at Cesar Chavez Park has concluded, and GGA staff and volunteers are already planning for the return of the owls in fall. To be prepared, we will hold docent training in early September 2010, date to be determined. If you want to get involved in protecting the owls and reaching out to the public, this is the opportunity for you. Returning docents are welcome to attend the training.

For information, visit www.goldengateaudubon.org/volunteer or contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox, Volunteer Coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.



Fair-weather birders finally caught a break in April, with warmer weather, longer days, green hills, and plenty of returning migrants. A few rarities came along for the ride.

LOONS TO DUCKS

A Pt. Reyes Birding and Nature Festival boat trip to Cordell Bank, MRN, on the 26th was rewarded with 30-minute views of a Greater Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis*) on calm seas (SH, DaW, oob). A land-based observer at Pigeon Pt., SM, located a Manx Shearwater on the 8th (RT). An aerial seabird survey documented a Black Storm-Petrel on the 6th, located 29 km. west of Pigeon Pt., SM (JDa, fide PJM).

Fly-over flocks of 15 and 16 migrating White-faced Ibis were spotted Apr. 9 at Hayward RS, ALA (BRi), and on the 18th over Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, SM (RT, LB). On the 27th, 4 Brant stopped in at Hayward RS at San Lorenzo Cr., ALA (BRi). A couple Long-tailed Ducks floated offshore at Pigeon Pt., SM, Apr. 8–9 (RT; TC, TW, PD).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

On the 18th, Broad-winged Hawks soared over Searsville L., SM (RT, LB), and Ed Levin Park, SCL (BRe, ST). An immature Swainson's Hawk cruised Coyote Cr. at Riverside Dr., SCL, on the 30th (RP, oob). The same day, a Prairie Falcon traversed Whitehouse Cr. Rd., SM (FT). A Black Rail was heard calling from Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, on the 26th (JC, DM).

On the 13th, a Pacific Golden-Plover paused at Hayward RS, ALA (NAP). Solitary Sandpipers passed through Apr. 21–25 at CCFS, SCL (BB); at L. Elizabeth in Fremont, ALA (fide AMD); between Santa Rosa and Sebastopol, SON (LH); and at the San Francisquito Cr. mitigation ponds, SM (RT, LB). During the same period, Drake's Estero, PRNS, MRN, hosted 5 Baird's Sandpipers (RS; mob) and a Pectoral Sandpiper (LS).

Red-necked Phalarope migration produced a high count of 800 birds on the



White-faced Ibis

30th at Rush Cr. ponds in Novato, MRN (RS). A single Red Phalarope headed north past Pigeon Pt. on the 24th (RT). The Apr. 26 Cordell Bank trip recorded 3 Sabine's Gulls (DaW, oob). An Apr. 15 seawatch from Pigeon Pt. spotted an Ancient Murrelet (RT).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

On the 26th, a Spotted Owl joined a 4-species owl chorus at Olema marsh overlook, PRNS, MRN (JC, DM). A day-roosting Long-eared Owl was discovered on the 24th at the EEC, SCL (MRo, oob). A Common Nighthawk hawked over Olsen Rd. in the Montezuma Hills, SOL, on the 13th (ZS).

A couple Black-chinned Hummingbirds were reported Apr. 13 from Hayward RS at Winton Ave., ALA (NAP), and another

Black-chinned visited an Antioch feeder CC on the 20th (PS, NS). From Apr. 10 to 15, Costa's Hummingbirds were sighted at Garin RP and Hayward RS (NAP) and at Ed Levin Park, SCL (MON). Calliope Hummingbird migration started Apr. 7, with reports from Ed Levin Park (AS, mob), at a Moraga feeder CC (DeW), and in Mitchell Cyn. in Mt. Diablo SP CC (PB, MRa, SR, JDu, mob).

A Gray Flycatcher was ID'd on the 28th along Coyote Cr. in Henry Coc SP, SCL (MRo, RJ). On the 19th, Townsend's Solitaires turned up at Mt. Davidson, SF (AK, JM, mob), and at Skylawn Memorial Park, SM (L, mob).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

A Palm Warbler visited Hayward RS at Depot Rd. on the 25th (P, CP, ZB).

On the 9th, a Black-chinned Sparrow explored the chaparral near Camp Tamarancho, MRN (BN). Vesper Sparrows were located on the 10th near Cantelow, 2 miles west of English Hills Rd., SOL (RM), and on the 19th at Sea Ranch, SON (RK). A Lapland Longspur lingered Apr. 13–14 at Hayward RS (BRi, ZB). Both the Rose-breasted Grosbeak and the Orchard Oriole remained ensconced at the Botanical Gardens in GGP, SF, the latter through the 16th (mob).

Hayward RS hosted a single Yellow-headed Blackbird on the 22nd (BRi). Finally, a Baltimore Oriole was tentatively identified on the 19th at the Menlo Park Library, SM (KC).

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviations: mob = many observers; oob = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Rod Thornton for helping compile Observations data.

Abbreviations for Observers: AK, Adam Keats; AMD, Amy McDonald; AS, Ashutosh Sinha; BB, Bill Bousman; BN, Bill Noble; BRe, Bob Reiling; BRi, Bob Richmond; CP, Caroline Pucette; DaW, David Wimpfheimer; DeW, Denise Wight; DM, Dominik Mosur; EP, Eric Pilotte; FT, Francis Toldi; JC, Josiah Clark; JDa, Jeff Davis; JDu, Judith Dunham; JM, Jeff Miller; KC, Karen Corbelli; LB, Leanne Baskin; LH, Lisa Hug; LS, Lang Stevenson; MON, Martha O'Neal; MRa, Mark Rauzon; MRo, Mike Rogers; NAP, Noah Arthur; NS, Nancy Schorr; PB, Pat Bacchetti; PD, Paul Donahue; P, M. Peter J. Metropoulos; PS, Paul Schorr; RJ, Richard Jeffers; RK, Richard Kuehn; RM, Roger Muskat; RP, Ryan Phillips; RS, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SH, Steve Howell; SR, Suzanne Rauzon; ST, Steve Tracey; TC, Ted Chappell; TW, Teresa Wood; ZB, Zach Baer; ZS, Zach Smith.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; CP, County Park; Cr, Creek; Cyn, Canyon; EEC, Environmental Education Center; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L, Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt, Mount; N, North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRNS, Pt. Reyes National Seashore; Pt, Point; Rd, Road; Res, Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S, South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant.

Special Event Focuses on Birds at Risk

In her striking watercolors, Bay Area artist Rita Sklar paints birds whose populations are in decline as a result of habitat loss, polluted water, changing climate, and other threats. An exhibit of her work, "Vanishing Birds of the Bay Area and Beyond," is on view through June 25 at the Craft and Cultural Arts Gallery in the State of California Office Building, 1515 Clay Street, Oakland. You are invited to attend a reception on Thursday, June 17, from 5 to 8 p.m., to meet Rita and to hear Golden Gate Audubon discuss our work to help reduce the decline of bird populations in the Bay Area.

In emphasizing the unique beauty of each species, Rita reminds us that the diminishing populations not only are a loss to birders but send an urgent warning about the health

of our environment. Efforts to restore habitats, ban pesticides, and protect migratory stopovers contributed to bringing back such species as the Brown Pelican, Peregrine Falcon, and Bald Eagle. Join us to find out what Golden Gate Audubon is doing to help birds that rely on Bay Area habitats.



Clapper Rail, watercolor by Rita Sklar.

Wildlife Guardians Provide Critical Help for Bay Area Birds

Now it's easier than ever to make a gift in support of Golden Gate Audubon's efforts to restore Bay Area habitats and protect birds and other wildlife. When you make a monthly donation on your credit card, your dollars quickly add up to provide the resources we rely on for our ongoing efforts. Just \$10 per month makes a contribution of up to \$120 a year! Please sign up at www.goldengateaudubon.org, or download a form and mail it to our office. Or call to sign up at 510.843.2222.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

ONE MONTH \$1000+ DONORS

Diane Ross-Leech and Robert W. Leech, Sarah Peterman, Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna Ridley

THREE MONTH \$500+ \$299

Eleanor Briccetti, Ruth and Alan Tobey

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WILDLIFE GUARDIAN

WILDLIFE GUARDIAN, THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Karim Al-Khafaji, Claire Nelson, Polly Strahan

MEMBER DONOR

Bob Power, in memory of Charles Lynes, father of GGA Conservation Director Mike Lynes

FIELD TRIP

Cathy Loewen, in honor of Dave Quady's recent Honey Lake field trip

CONGREGATION

Congregation Emanu-El

Help Golden Gate Audubon Soar

Your memberships and generous donations keep our wings beating!

If you are a volunteer and not yet a Supporting Member of Golden Gate Audubon, please sign up now at www.goldengateaudubon.org or call us to join (510.843.2222).

If you picked up this newsletter at a special event, please think about the pressing need to protect dwindling and threatened bird populations and join us now to support our work. If you are already a member, please consider making a special donation to help us meet our budget goals so that we can continue the outstanding conservation work we have been doing since 1917!

Your donations can accomplish a lot. Consider these examples.

A gift of \$50 can provide our volunteer coordinator the time to teach 20 to 30 volunteers how to plant native vegetation at a restoration site.

A gift of \$120 can provide an exciting environmental learning experience for two students in our Eco-Oakland and Eco-Richmond programs.

A gift of \$2,500 can support our education van as it travels to restoration sites and classroom and family events for an entire year.

A gift of \$5,000 or more can help ensure that the decades-old wind turbines at Altamont Pass will be upgraded, thereby reducing the more than 1,500 avian deaths per year they now cause.

Please don't wait to make your donation online at www.goldengateaudubon.org. Or send it to us at 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Ste. G, Berkeley, CA 94702.

If you would like to donate stock or other appreciated property and receive a tax deduction, please call Marsha Mather-Thrift, Development Director, at 510.843.7295.

Ballot for Election of Golden Gate Audubon Board of Directors

Ballots received by the June 30, 2010, ballot election deadline will be counted in accordance with the choice specified for each candidate. **Please vote for up to five candidates.**

DIRECTOR NOMINEE	TERM ENDING	YES	NO
Karim Al-Khafaji	2013		
Alan Harper	2013		
Michael Lozeau	2013		
Sarah Peterman	2013		
Jay Pierrepont	2013		

SIGNATURE: _____

☐ **Yes, I would like to begin receiving the *Gull* online.** Please send me an email notice when the *Gull* is posted on the Golden Gate Audubon website. My email address is _____



2010 GGA Board Election—Make Your Vote Count

The 2010 election for Golden Gate Audubon members to select directors of the GGA board of directors will take place by written ballot. The board's Development Committee, with the approval of the board, has nominated the five candidates listed above. A total of 35 ballots is needed to meet the quorum requirement of the Golden Gate Audubon bylaws.

Members in good standing are asked to vote by completing and signing the ballot form above and returning it to the Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94705, on or before June 30, 2010.

Deadline for receipt of ballots is June 30, 2010.

KARIM AL-KHAFAJI

Named a designated director in September 2009, Karim Al-Khafaji works for The Bridgespan Group, a strategic consulting firm that serves philanthropic and nonprofit organizations. With Bridgespan, Karim has primarily focused on environmental clients, including the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Energy Foundation, Natural Capital Project, and Yellowstone Park Foundation. He holds a PhD in ecology. Karim serves on the Nominating and Development Committees.

ALAN HARPER

Joining the board in October 2009 as a designated director, Alan Harper serves as chair of the Education Committee and is a member of the Development Committee. Alan, who holds a PhD in zoology, is a founder of Terra Peninsular AC, a Mexican nonprofit

dedicated to the conservation of land in Baja California. He is also on the boards of Terra Peninsular, the California Institute for Biodiversity, and the Jiji Foundation. He is currently at work on a book about Baja California.

MICHAEL LOZEAU

Named a designated director in November 2009, Michael Lozeau is a partner in the law firm of Lozeau-Drury LLP, an environmental law firm representing nonprofit environmental groups and unions. He is a former staff attorney and lecturer in law at Earthjustice and the Stanford Law School. He is also a former board member and executive director of San Francisco Baykeeper and former vice president of Waterkeeper Alliance. Michael serves on the Development and Conservation Committees.

SARAH PETERMAN

Sarah Peterman joined the board in December 2009 as a designated director. She is an associate with the law firm Farella Braun and Martel LLP, where she focuses on environmental and natural resources litigation. Sarah serves on the Education and Communications Committees.

JAY PIERREPONT

Named a designated director in October 2009, Jay Pierrepont chairs the Development Committee. He is a managing partner at Pantheon Ventures, a global fund that invests in private equity and infrastructure. As a managing partner, he is responsible for business development and client service for North America.

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MONITORING BIRDS from page 1

Since January, volunteer Dominik Mosur has been conducting area searches and spot-mapping birds at the Beach Chalet soccer fields in Golden Gate Park. This survey is particularly important because the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department has proposed to replace the four natural grass soccer fields with synthetic turf. The city's project will remove several acres of grass meadow and more than 45 shrubs and trees that are used by more than 30 species of birds throughout the year. The plan also calls for installing 60-foot-tall stadium lights, which will be operated until at least 10 p.m. nightly. These changes will more than triple use of the fields, bringing many more people to the site year-round. We hope that our information will help ensure the implementation of a more environmentally sound alternative to the synthetic turf and lighting project.

For years, Golden Gate Audubon volunteers have conducted a variety of bird censuses at and around Lake Merced in San Francisco. Golden Gate Audubon volunteer Dan Murphy has monitored land birds and nesting Great Egrets and Double-crested Cormorants at the site. This year, volunteer Dominik Mosur commenced a series of point

counts at Lake Merced specifically to better quantify the breeding population of San Francisco Common Yellowthroats, a California species of special concern.

Massive redevelopment in the Candlestick Point and Hunters Point areas is likely to have a significant impact on the Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. The city of San Francisco has already proposed to give approximately 20 percent of the park to a developer to expand construction of high-density residential and commercial buildings adjacent to the park. Not only will this plan reduce the size of the park, but the development will bring an increase in population, which could have significant consequences for the area's wildlife.

Concerned about these impacts, Golden Gate Audubon applied for and received a grant from the California State Parks Foundation for land bird monitoring at the park. This funding will enable us to conduct a series of surveys of migratory and breeding birds that use the park's upland habitats. The information gathered will contribute to a baseline of ecological information about the site before new development changes the area forever.

For a fourth year, we will continue our survey of dilapidated piers and other structures

at San Francisco's southern waterfront. In 2007, 2008, and 2009, survey teams recorded more than 25 species using these structures, including breeding Caspian Terns, the only such colony in San Francisco. Information from the surveys will be used to study and mitigate the impacts when the piers are removed over the next several years because of safety concerns.

CONTINUING MONITORING IN 2010

Golden Gate Audubon offers opportunities to get involved in monitoring throughout the year. In addition to the projects mentioned here, TernWatch at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge runs from May through July (see page 4). Plover Watch at San Francisco's Ocean Beach and Crissy Field will continue from July through April 2011. In the East Bay, we will resume our Western Burrowing Owl docent and monitoring program at Berkeley's Cesar Chavez Park in late 2010 (see page 8).

For these projects to be successful, we need your help. Please consider joining us as a volunteer bird monitor—no experience is needed! You can learn new skills while collecting information that contributes to the conservation of Bay Area birds.

—Mike Lynes, Conservation Director